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Join Us In Interpreting
America's
Great
Outdoors

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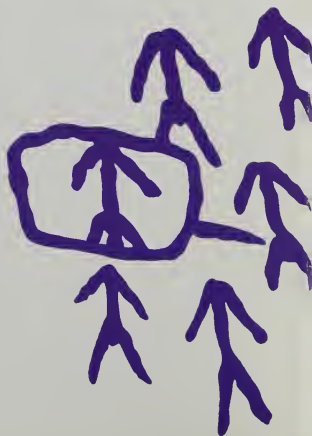
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Do you know that the National Forest System is the largest provider of outdoor recreation in the world? Or that most Americans live within a day's drive of a national forest? The role of the National Forest System in the recreation and tourism industry is substantial and the potential is even greater! Every American citizen owns this rich and diverse heritage of natural wonders—wildernesses, wild and scenic rivers, trails, ski areas, cultural and historic sites, glaciers, deserts, rangelands, sand dunes, and swamp-lands, as well as many types of forests and ecosystems. This is America's Great Outdoors!



What Is Interpretation?

Many of our forest visitors, though they are very interested in the outdoors, don't have access to knowledge and information about the natural world. Nature is beautiful and fascinating to them, but they lack the key that opens the doors of understanding, the treasure house of knowledge accumulated by biologists, historians, archeologists, foresters, and others who work closely with the land. Interpretation can give these visitors this key, thus deepening their appreciation for the great outdoors. Visitors who never have given much attention to the outdoors may find themselves fascinated by a whole new world.



Forest Service interpreters serve as guides to National Forest System visitors, introducing them to the natural and cultural features of the forest and how they are managed. They do this by translating and interpreting nature's language. The forest interpreter helps our Forest Service customers by communicating in ways that reveal meaning, provoke thought, and help people gain appreciation for their national forests. It is an art, a science, a form of information, education, and entertainment all combined!

Millions of visitors come to visit the national forests every year. Extraordinary opportunities exist on and near the national forests to inform, interpret, and educate visitors about these incredibly diverse public lands. You can join us in serving visitors and in caring for the land, by becoming a *partner in interpretation!*

What Are Partnerships in Interpretation?

Forest Service interpretive partnerships are developed to help more people appreciate and understand the national forests. The Forest Service provides training, information, guidance, and in some cases, people to conduct interpretive services to our partners' clients. The partners assist in funding some of the positions, providing travel and facilities, as well as other portions of the interpretive projects. The end result is a cooperative forest interpretation program that helps visitors enjoy America's Great Outdoors.

There are many examples of successful partnerships with the Forest Service that have been exciting visitors about America's Great Outdoors. Here are just a few of many outstanding ones across the country:



Resort Forest Interpreters

Several small, family-owned lake resorts in northern Minnesota, several local foundations, and the Forest Service are all combining efforts to place forest interpreters at the resorts to lead hikes, tour local sawmills, and give programs. The resort owners quickly found that their customers were staying longer, repeating visits, and were generally more pleased with their stays because of these additional activities for their families.



Forest Interpreters at Sea

The State of Alaska joined the Forest Service to provide Forest Service interpreters on board the State ferry fleet, which travels from Bellingham, Washington, to Skagway, Alaska, through the scenic Inside Passage. Forest interpreters provide interpretive talks, films, children's programs and narration about the history, culture and the natural resources of the area. The success of this partnership speaks for itself—over 25 years of experience at helping visitors enjoy and appreciate our Nation's last frontier. Alaska and the Forest Service together have been able to do so much more for visitors!





Forest Interpreters on Horseback in Wyoming

Dude ranches around Jackson, Wyoming, are cooperating with the Bridger-Teton National Forest to fund interpreters to give evening programs and interpretive trail rides at the ranches.

Full Access to National Forests

Mobility International USA, Telephone Pioneers of America, the Easter Seal Society of Oregon, local civic groups, and the Forest Service are working together to construct interpretive trails and fishing platforms with interpretive signage in national forests in Oregon and Washington.



Forest Interpreters Ride the Rails

America's railroads pass through some of the most spectacular national forest scenery in the country. In the Pacific Northwest, the Forest Service and AMTRAK have entered into a partnership to provide uniformed forest interpreters on portions of AMTRAK routes as they pass through national forests. Forest interpreters provide insight and interpretation into the history, culture, natural features, and management of these areas as passengers travel through *America's Great Outdoors*.



Interpretive Training for Commercial Operators

In many areas of the country, Forest Service offices are conducting training for commercial businesses that operate on the national forests. For the past several years in Alaska, the Forest Service has conducted training for the staffs of large cruise ships about the features and management of the national forests so they can provide interpretation for the many thousands of cruise ship passengers that visit the area each year. In Idaho, outfitters and guides work with Forest Service people to learn more about the rivers and the areas that they will be operating. More opportunities abound!

How Can a Partnership Help You?

- By expanding your market base
- By promoting tourism, recreational, and interpretive activities that will help build strong, diversified rural economies
- By offering new opportunities and experiences to your customers
- By pointing to ways to diversify your business and attract new customers
- By helping people gain a greater appreciation for America's natural, historical, and archeological resources
- By providing interpretive opportunities for ethnic minorities; elderly, physically challenged, and economically disadvantaged citizens; and others
- By reducing vandalism, littering, and other depreciative behaviors that detract from visitors' experiences



Who Can Benefit From Partnerships?

Actually, everybody benefits! The land itself, the Forest Service, and the people of the United States, as well as you the partner. We know we have customers in common with many of you who serve people in the great American outdoors:

- resorts
- outfitters and guides
- tourism associations
- ski areas
- cruise ships
- photography groups
- dude ranches
- museums
- tour guides
- local civic groups
- associations of disabled citizens
- retirees
- historians
- naturalists
- forest industries
- bus tours
- birdwatchers
- wildlife organizations
- outdoor education groups
- geologists
- State & county parks & recreation agencies
- volunteers

...just to name a few!





Together we can achieve so much more. Recreation services contribute to local economies, help protect resources, and provide important services to our customers.

Sound interesting? We are ready to work with YOU! There are 9 Forest Service regional offices, 156 national forest supervisor's offices, and 690 local ranger stations across the Nation to serve you. We encourage you to contact any of these field offices or the Forest Service's Washington, DC, headquarters and take ownership in your national forests.



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